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IEEE Neural Networks Council Group Votes to End Agreement with INNS After the 1993 Conferences

Paul Werbos is the newly elected president of the International Neural Network Society, (INNS) the largest membership organization devoted to neurocomputing concerns and pursuits. Werbos, who now works at the United States National Science Foundation, is famous in the field for his early discovery of the neural network approach now known as backward error propagation.

Judith Dayhoff, of **Judith Dayhoff and Associates**, the author of the recently published *Neural Network Architectures* (**Van Nostrand Reinhold**), was elected INNS vice president.

Werbos is facing a crisis at the very beginning of his new term. Before most people knew that he had been elected, Werbos received word that the IEEE's (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers) neural network council administrative committee had moved by vote to end the joint meeting agreement with INNS after meetings to be held in 1993. It was through this agreement that the IJCNN (International *(continued on 3)*

INNS, IEEE TO END MEET AGREEMENT

(Continued from 1) Joint Conferences on Neural Networks) meetings were organized and sponsored by both organizations.

Werbos, who's latest published work is *Neural Networks for Control* (co-edited with W. Thomas Miller and Richard Sutton; **Bradford Books/MIT Press**), said of the vote and decision by the IEEE neural networks council's "adcomm": "This was a complete surprise to me. There had been some disagreements between the organizations, but nothing that wasn't worked out."

Robert Marks of the U of WA/Seattle, who's patent #4,849,940 appeared in the January, 1990 issue of **INTELLIGENCE**, spoke of the vote on behalf of the IEEE neural net council. He noted that the council may eventually become a full

society within the IEEE structure. He said that the vote to dissolve the agreement because the focus of interest of the neural net council was expanding.

Asked whether the vote was final, Marks said: "Yes. It is final. You could see that now we [the two organizations] are divorced. But that doesn't mean that we might not live together again in the future. And, if you consider the conferences to be like our children, there might be more in the future. Further negotiations will determine the future nature of the IEEE/INNS relationship."

Stanford U's Bernard Widrow, the outgoing president of INNS, and the person many people cited as responsible for keeping the two organizations in agreement over the past two years, would only say: "INNS will thrive and IEEE will thrive. Hopefully they will find ways to cooperate in the future."

Sources close to both the IEEE and the INNS told **INTELLIGENCE** that the real reasons for the IEEE vote were two-fold: IEEE's feelings of impatience with the slow decision-making process at INNS and that they were outgrowing the relationship with INNS and wanted to expand their interest to other technical areas like genetic algorithms and fuzzy logic. IEEE has announced the sponsorship of a fuzzy logic meeting for February, 1992 in San Diego.

The next IJCNN is scheduled for Seattle, July 8-12, 1991. Plenary , invited and tutorial speakers were recently announced. The plenary speakers will be Geoffrey Hinton (U of Toronto); Jack Cowan (U of Chicago) and Rodney Brooks (MIT). Invited speakers will be: Shun-ichi Amari (U of Tokyo); Yaser Abu-Mostafa (Caltech); Tomaso Poggio (MIT); Dana Ballard (U of Rochester); Gerald Tesauro (IBM); George Cybenko (U of IL); Stephen Omohundro (ICSI); Lawrence Rabiner (AT&T); and, Christoph von der Malsburg (Ruhr Universitat Bochum).